

building COMMUNITY

For Indiana's Third Century

May-June 2004

**building
COMMUNITY**, a bimonthly publication of Indiana 2016, solicits articles from around Indiana that illustrate community-based efforts. Please electronically submit articles to kbrett@dwd.state.in.us. Digital photographs are accepted and encouraged.

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Family-Ark themed Summer Camp Builds Community

by Katy Brett



The "Family Ark" from the 2003 Summer Camp.

Walk into the Indiana Women's Prison on July 22, 2003 and what would you have seen? Clowns, animals, tents, cook-outs, games, and activities—what else would you expect to find at summer camp? The staff at the Indiana Women's Prison knows how to make a camp fun—and fun at this annual summer camp means these traditional summer camp experiences, but it also means spending time

together and engaging in activities that build bonds leading to stronger families—and stronger communities! Science. Problem-solving skills. Creativity. Indiana needs creative, confident people who enjoy working together to solve our problems. And, the activities at this summer camp, like the version of the Indiana's Einsteins event held at the Indiana State Fairgrounds last spring (see the July 2003 issue of Building Community), are fostering those values and offering mothers and children, who have a limited amount of time together throughout the year, the opportunity to solve those problems together.

Conducting a summer camp at a prison isn't easy. Part of the on-going Family Preservation Program, this summer camp aims to build and preserve the bond that exists between a mother (or grandmother) and her child, as well as focusing on the children's health, safety, care and development. Envisioned by Superintendent Dana Blank, the camp involves all departments, and staff members spend months planning and organizing for the event. Staff member Dewey Brown's woodworking and arts classes build all the tents, the ark (part of last year's theme), and even transform a segment of the grounds into a temporary lake for water activities. Camp volunteers include inmates without children attending.

The Women's prison staff, inmates, and volunteers are proving that summer camp can be deeply meaningful—developing life skills and encouraging familial bonds—without losing any of the traditional summer camp experience. The children return to their schools and communities better equipped to engage in their communities, with the confidence and assurance that their mothers can still be a part of their lives. Further, the women at the prison work together to ensure a safe and healthy atmosphere for the camp, practicing the skills they will need in the future.

This is one group that is building community effectively—"two by two". **To find out more about the 2004 summer camp, please contact the Indiana Women's Prison at 317-639-2671.**



Judy O'Bannon chats with campers.

Gatherings

by Judy O'Bannon



Scene captured by Judy O'Bannon at Governor O'Bannon's memorial service held in Indianapolis.

I've been doing a lot of reflecting lately. Sometimes with family, other times with friends and coworkers. Together, we recall places visited, laughs and tears shared, mutual friends treasured and beliefs held. And these reflections—on the life of Frank O'Bannon—are impossible without considering his commitment to volunteerism and service.

In our hometown of Corydon, I walked by the Old State Capitol, where in 1816 our founding fathers devoted their time to craft the same constitution that serves us well today. Just across the street more than a hundred years later, Frank continued that tradition of service—in his law office and at the family newspaper. He and his family were of the fabric of the place, and time, energies and resources devoted to the community were never something they questioned.

Frank loved the inspiration, guidance and just plain pleasure of the sense of community that he was surrounded by. And, over the years, this same community helped his parents raise him as a child, encouraged him in government service and most recently brought hot soup to our home at his passing.

When you volunteer in your community, the service you render to others—whether it's in your place of worship, in your schools, or in agencies that provide necessities for your neighbors—is a continuation of this same, longstanding, Hoosier tradition of service.

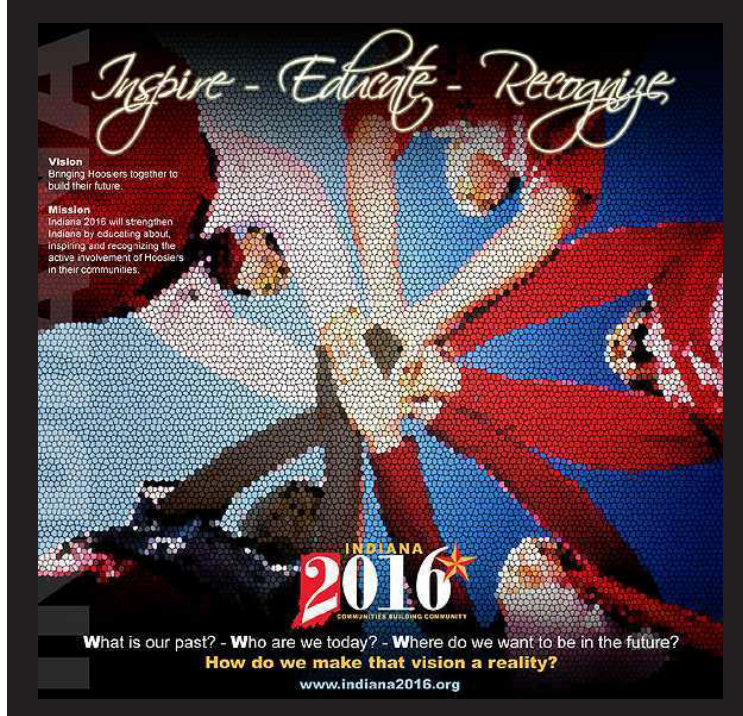
We stand as a people with outstretched arms reaching back in time to the roots and foundation of our being and reaching forward for the hands of those yet to come. They, too, will pause to serve and to make their marks on the place we call Indiana. In this continuing tradition of civic duty, we can all find satisfaction in our yesterdays and hope for our tomorrows.

Throughout Indiana, countless activities and initiatives that strengthen our communities are taking place. Hoosiers are creating opportunities for citizens of all ages to be a part of what is going on. They are truly **building community**! Each week *Communities Building Community* shows one success story after another, thanks to WFYI public television. A second season premieres this summer on public television stations statewide. Check your local listing for times and log onto www.wfyi.org to discover new ways you can get involved in YOUR community.



“We stand as a people with outstretched arms reaching back in time to the roots and foundation of our being and reaching forward for the hands of those yet to come.”

Artwork
created by:
**Rob
Theodoro,
Purdue
University.**



It's YOUR turn!

If you have always wanted to volunteer more, but you weren't sure where to start, you'll appreciate these suggestions from the Indiana Commission on Community Service and Volunteerism.



www.in.gov/iccsv

Ways to Volunteer

- Tutor a child
- Write a note to a shut-in
- Clean up a local park
- Host a child in need
- Help your neighborhood watch
- Serve on a non-profit board
- Map your community's assets
- Plant a community garden
- Coach a youth sports team
- Collect items for a food pantry
- Teach English
- Transport an elderly citizen
- Lead museum tours
- Call potential donors
- Build affordable homes
- Support school activities
- Provide no-cost professional services
- Get involved in a cause
- Join a service club
- Throw a block party



Resources

- Boys and Girls Clubs
- United Ways
- Volunteer Action Centers
- Youth Service Bureaus
- Neighborhood Associations
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Local Businesses
- Historical Societies
- Transitional Housing Institutions
- Center for Asset-Based Community Development
- Food Pantries
- Corporation for National Community Service
- AmeriCorps
- Colleges/Universities
- Senior Citizen Centers
- Community Foundations

Why Volunteer?

by Lavenna M. Putnam
RSVP of Delaware County

After I retired, my husband and I had time to enjoy our home, share camping, fishing, traveling, playing with grandsons, visiting with friends, relatives and each other. Then my husband suddenly dropped dead in our living room.

Only someone who has experienced it can know the devastation of the silent, empty house of a woman who has lost not only her husband, but her best friend. I was no longer half of a couple as I had been for almost 49 years. What would I do with all that time? Who would have the time or patience to talk with me day-to-day? Family and friends were sympathetic, but their lives are full and busy, working and continuing their own activities.

First I went to Minnetrista Cultural Center where I worked as a docent, learning, expanding my acquaintances and finding a few permanent new friends. Next I joined RSVP which brought such a variety of volunteering which needed to be done. I joined YWCA Women's Chorus with practices and performances.

At a friend's suggestion, I joined Third Age Theater directed by a volunteer speech teacher from the Ball State University faculty. In that group, I helped entertain at retirement homes, college classes, elementary schools, army reunions, church events-wherever entertainment was needed. We even performed in Disney World and Las Vegas at National Older Actors conventions.

Ushering at Emens Auditorium, I met other people at loose ends with their leisure time. We could help, and at the same time enjoy good music and shows for free, and without an escort. RSVP brought endless requests which I could accept or refuse as my schedule could allow. I have helped sell green carnations, helped entertain children at the YWCA at Christmas time, answered the telephone for Muncie Symphony, helped with free long-distance phone calls at Christmas time.

My most recent volunteering opportunity came when I responded to a request for volunteers to read the newspaper to the blind and print-impaired. I now read the front page of the daily newspaper by phone and voice recording for the WFYI Teleplex Dial-Up Radio Reading project. Blind people I will never meet can enjoy and appreciate my help. This warms my heart.

In each project, I meet lively, interesting people who have time for me. I don't have to push myself into the busy lives of my relatives; but when I am with them, I have accounts of my own activities to share with them. My calendar is full and my days are varied.

Foster Parenting: “Good Work” For Our Communities

by Christina Morrison

In the late 1990s, in response to growing awareness that children needed permanency in their lives, federal legislation was enacted to encourage foster parenting. Foster parents adopted thousands of children who had been in the foster care system; as a result many of these parents were no longer available to foster other children.

Now Indiana needs more foster parents. Indiana Family Social Services Administration (FSSA) – the Division of Family and Children and the Indiana Foster Care and Adoption Association (IFCAA) have teamed up to educate our communities about the value of foster care and recruit more foster parents across the state.

This statewide effort is called “Foster Parenting. Good Work!” and promotes foster parenting as a valuable, rewarding public service.

Foster care provides a safety net for children and families in times of crisis. Setting a child on a path to achievement saves individual lives while saving local, county and state governments dollars and creating relationships between children and their communities. Equally important is the way that foster parents are able to create a loving, nurturing environment for these children during an unsettling time in their lives—not only does the child have a greater chance to succeed, but so does the

community!

To avoid having to move children numerous times and cause them emotional harm, many child welfare agencies are trying to develop a pool of back-up parents. Trained and willing foster parents who stay “on-call” to take in a child when a child’s needs match up with the skills and home life of a particular foster family.

It’s very similar to the idea of volunteer firemen. We hope that we don’t have a fire, but if we do, we know we can count on those volunteer firemen to help us. Similarly, we need trained foster parents in our neighborhoods. We hope that a child doesn’t have to come in to care, but if a child does, we know we can count on those parents. And we value them even if a child is never placed in their home.

IFCAA has held a number of awareness events around the state. Foster parent recruitment and awareness activities are currently being scheduled in many communities.

If you are thinking about becoming a foster parent or want to know more about being a foster parent, or if your community is interested in learning more or scheduling a presentation, please call 1-800-468-4228.

Christina Morrison is the Executive Director (E.D.) of the Indiana Foster Care and Adoption Association.



File photo provided by IFCAA.



Mark Your Calendars!

The Second Annual Governor’s Conference on Service and Volunteerism will be held October 6 and 7, 2004 at the Radisson City Centre in downtown Indianapolis. The title of this year’s conference will be “Volunteers Building Community: Growth, Leadership, and Collaboration”. Contact Sherry Early-Aden for more details at searly-aden@dwd.state.in.us.

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